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MELVIN L. "KIP" HOLDEN
Mayor-President

November 3, 2008

The Honorable Kevin J. Martin
The Honorable Michael J. Copps
The Honorable Jonathan S. Adelstein
The Honorable Deborah Taylor Tate
The Honorable Robert M. McDowell
Federal Communications Commission
445 -12th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20554

Re: WT Docket No. 06-150 and PS Docket No. 06-229

Dear Mr. Chairman and Commissioners:

I understand that the FCC is currently considering a proposal to amend its rules so as to allow local jurisdictions like Baton Rouge to immediately deploy broadband public safety systems using the 700 MHz public safety allocation, with such systems integrated later into any subsequent shared commercial/public safety 700 MHz network.¹ I write to express my wholehearted support for this proposed rule change.

While the FCC continues its work to encourage the nationwide deployment of a public/private interoperable broadband network in the 700 MHz band, it also should allow local public safety broadband deployment to begin in areas where local officials are ready, willing and able to proceed while the nationwide network is being developed.

As the FCC has recognized, broadband capabilities offer public safety agencies countless new ways to protect life and property. Our first responders here in Baton Rouge need access to broadband communications sooner rather than later, and our local government is prepared to make the required investment if we have confidence that we will be reasonably compensated by the eventual D Block licensee when our local network is integrated into the nationwide network. The FCC should use commercially reasonable standards to govern that compensation, which will be fair to the D Block licensee and will enable public safety agencies in communities like Baton Rouge to enjoy the benefits of broadband sooner. The FCC should act now to make this possible.

¹ See *Service Rules for the 698-746, 747-762 and 777-792 MHz Bands; Implementing a Nationwide, Broadband, Interoperable Public Safety Network in the 700 MHz Band*, WT Docket No. 06-150 and PS Docket No. 06-229, *Third Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking*, 23 FCC Rcd 14301 (2008), at ¶¶ 301-304.

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The FCC should require that any locally-deployed 700 MHz public safety networks meet the technical specifications and requirements identified in the *Third Further Notice* in this proceeding to ensure that operations in the 700 MHz band make much-needed broadband services available to help benefit public safety agencies save lives and protect property.

Further, local public safety agencies will ensure that local broadband networks are tailored to local public safety needs. Thus, both in the near- and long-term, the proposed rule change will serve the interests of public safety agencies, and by extension, the interests of the public at large. Indeed, in the event that the eventual nationwide network does not extend to a particular locality, allowing for local deployment may be the only way to prevent that area from being left without broadband public safety services.

The FCC should seize this opportunity to accelerate the provision of broadband public safety communications services to first responders on a local basis. I would be happy to respond to any questions you may have.

Very truly yours,



Melvin L. "Kip" Holden
Mayor-President

cc: Erika Olsen
Bruce Gottlieb
Renee Crittendon
Wayne Leighton
Angela Giancarlo
Derek Poarch
Jeff Cohen